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Illustrated History

OF THE

Dayton Fire Department

TOGETHER WITH A

Few Chapters Treating on the Successful Men of the City who in some way Contributed to its Success.

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Containing Portraits and Biographical Sketches of Many of the Leaders in Business, Professional and Political Life.

DAYTON, OHIO.
1900

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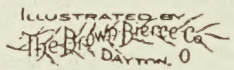

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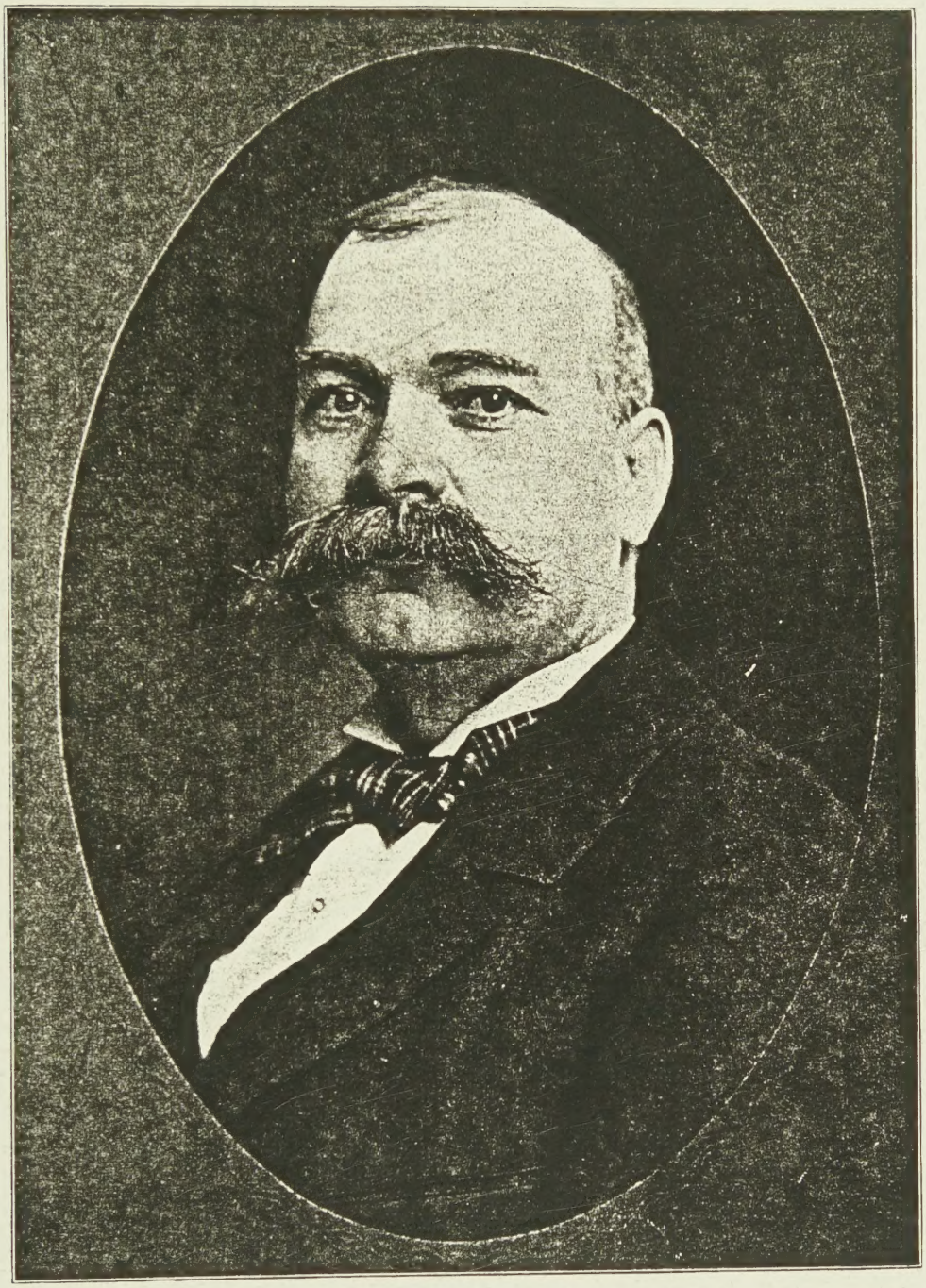
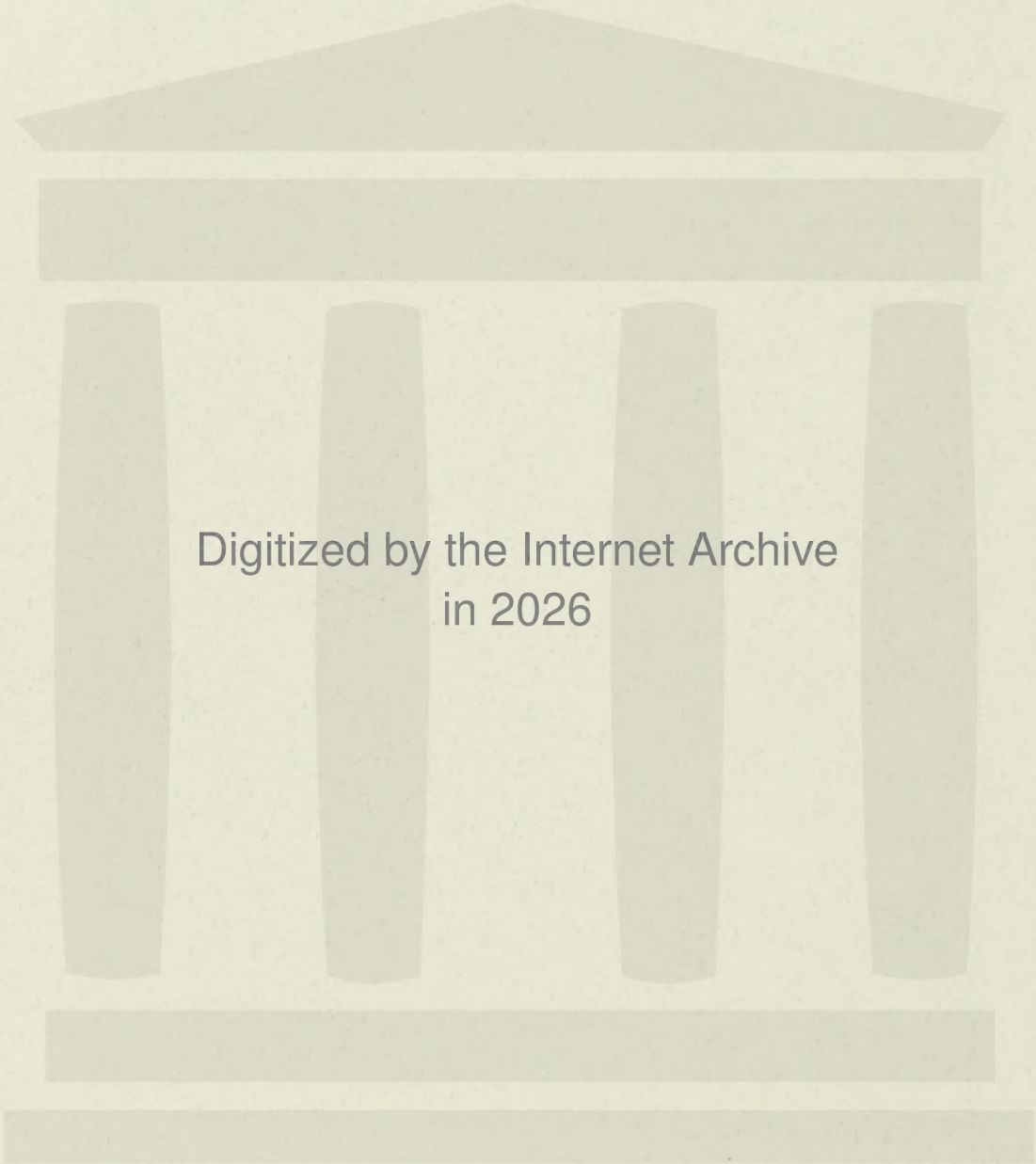
I am indebted to Dorothy Smith and the Dunbar Library Special Collections and Archives at Wright State University for allowing me to reprint this book. And, as always, thanks to the gang at Asylum Graphics for their professional service, friendly help and kind advice.

Curt Dalton
2058 Ottello Avenue
Dayton, OH 45414

Good Luck and Good Hunting!



D. C. LARKIN, Chief.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Introductory

A History of the Dayton Fire Department is in many respects the history of the city itself. The progress made in fifty years by the city is no greater, if as great, as has been achieved by the fire laddies.

It appears ludicrous to picture such well-known and successful men as Jas. McDaniel, Henry Hilgefort, Allen Jeffers, Ezra Bimm, John Harries, Edmund Zwiesler, A. Shinn, Geo. Lehman, Wm. Mc Hose, Moses Crowell, Wm. Legler, William Shoup, William Altick, all still living, chasing pell-mell down the street, forty or fifty years ago, with leather buckets to extinguish a big blaze; and later, to think of them dragging by a long rope a fire engine that first had to be filled with water with these same leather buckets, before a stream could be pumped from it on to the flames.

Such was the manner in which these old time fire laddies had to contend with destructive flames, and they often made up by persistent effort, daring and hard work, for what in latter years was easily accomplished with improved machinery; first of which was the suction engine, a very crude and inadequate affair compared with the powerful engines of late years.

Contrast this condition with what prevails today, and you readily comprehend, what progress has been made in the mode of saving lives and property from fire. Dayton at no time lagged in proficiency in her fire department, but not until the organization of the metropolitan department in 1880 did the department forge ahead and soon take its place as one of the best, not only in Ohio, but in the United States. Only twenty-five years ago, when the management of the affairs of the department was still in the hands of the city council, the department consisted of only nineteen men all told, three second class rotary engines, six cumbersome hose reels, twelve horses and 8000 feet of hose, half of a cheap and inferior quality. The cost to maintain this department was about $20,000 per year. Today there are 78 men in the department; it

has over $200,000 worth of property, and is operated at an annual expense of about $65,000. The efficiency of the department has been multiplied several times, and the levy to defray the expenses is less on the $1,000 valuation of property than it was twenty-five years ago.

In the twenty years since the organization of the metropolitan department, the fire losses in Dayton has reached less than $1,400,000, with an insurance of nearly $12,000,000. The heaviest losses were in the years '93 and '94, and last year. The losses over insurance paid has averaged about $2,000 per year for the twenty years since the present department was organized. The loss per capita has but twice exceeded $1.00 in any one year, and frequently has fallen below 50 cents, and on a few occasions as low as 25 cents. The per capita loss for the year ending March 31, 1900, is nearly $6.00, being the greatest Dayton has ever suffered, due to the the great fire on east First Street, the burning of the Luthern Church, the Gebhart Lumber Yard fires, the Dayton Spice Mills, and other serious fires.

The object of this publication is to present these facts, here stated concisely, in detail, and in as interesting a manner as possibly, thus hoping to make of the work a volume that will be appreciated.

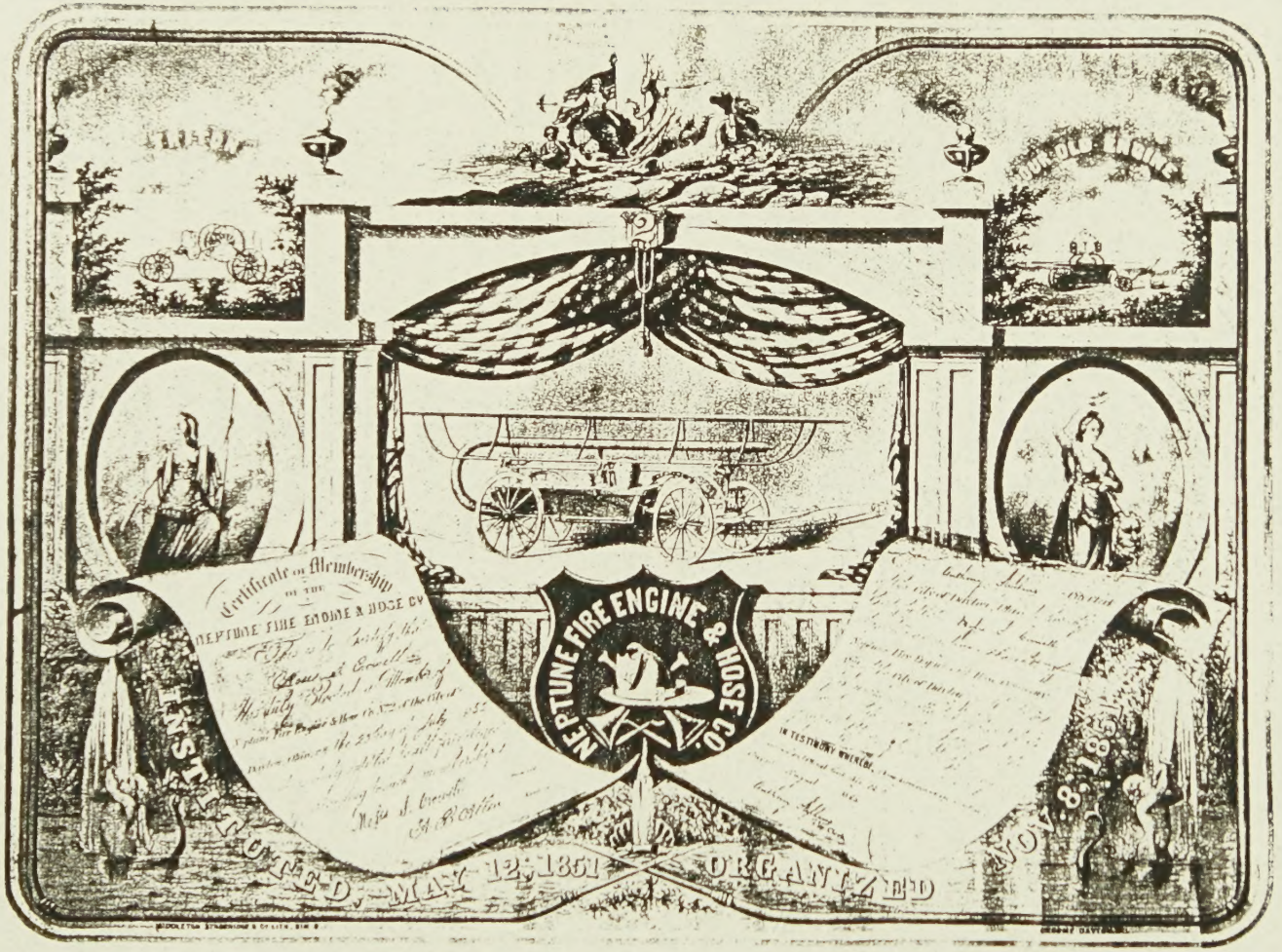
THE VOLUNTEER LADDIES.

Some Interesting Facts about the "Old Timers" and their Work.

The first fire company Dayton had was what was known as the Independence Company. Just when the organization was formed is doubtful—it sprang into being from necessity, and existed in an indifferent way for many years before a formal organization was effected. Other similar companies were in vogue, and after the Independence Company was once organized, others followed, and as early as 1846, Dayton was the proud possessor of three crack fire companies, "The Independence," "Vigilance" and "Safety," and soon afterwards "The Oregons," "Pacifics," "Miamis," "Neptune" and "Deluge" Companies were organized. There were other names given these companies at divers times, such as "Wooden Shoes," indicating the company composed largely of Germans, and so long and creditably commanded by Tony Stephans, who finally lost his life while making with his boys on exhibition run, with their old engine, at the Centennial Parade on September 16, 1896, on south Main Street; the "Silver Tails," a name used to represent the company made up largely of merchants, and the "Plug Uglies," the name given in derision to the company made up largely of the wealthier classes, because of thier habit, then in vogue, of wearing plug hats.

ALLEN JEFFERS
As he Looked when a Volunteer Fireman.

The rivalry existing between these companies was very intense, and often it led to bitter encounters when one or the other attempted to take an advantage in running to, or fighting a fire. Each of the companies had about one hundred men enrolled, and an alarm of fire invariably brought them all out, and a fire was often reached by one or the other of the companies, as quickly as it now is with horses.



Certificate of Membership of an Old Volunteer Fire Company.

The Vigilance Company was disbanded by the mayor of the city in 1856, after the fire at the Morrison residence, because of the murder of William Richards, one of the "Wooden Shoe" or Deluge Company. The two companies reached the scene of the fire together and where soon engaged in a bitter battle for vantage position. The air was full of flying bricks and clubs, and when it was all over, Richards was picked up with his skull crushed with a brick. Other serious incidents of this character can be cited, but this one will suffice to describe the rivalry existing between these organizations, which condition manifests why these primitive fire fighters so often did such effective work. No amount of work was too great, and the daring displayed was often foolhardiness in the extreme.

The Vigilance boys sometime after their official disbandment, were reorganized into the Miamis, and remained in active service as long as the other companies.

EZRA BIMM, at Fourteen,
When he Began Running with the Machine.

The primitive *modus operandi* of fighting fire was by the use of leather buckets. When an alarm was sounded the boys who considered themselves firemen would rush to the fire-house, grab a bucket and run. Others had buckets at their houses for use. Later the engine came into use, the first one coming to Dayton being built by William Jeffers, brother of Allen Jeffers, who at the time was one of the important officers of the Independence Company. The engine was built in Pawtucket, R. I., and when it arrived in Dayton it was the seven days wonder for a time. It held several barrels of water, and was filled by the leather buckets, by forming lines from a cistern to the engine and passing the filled buckets along the line. The two pumps were operated to throw the water through the hose on to the fire. This was the sort of engine in use up to about 1855, when a suction engine was purchased by the Neptune Company. Others, some of them double deckers, followed and every company soon had a very satisfactory machine. They were of different

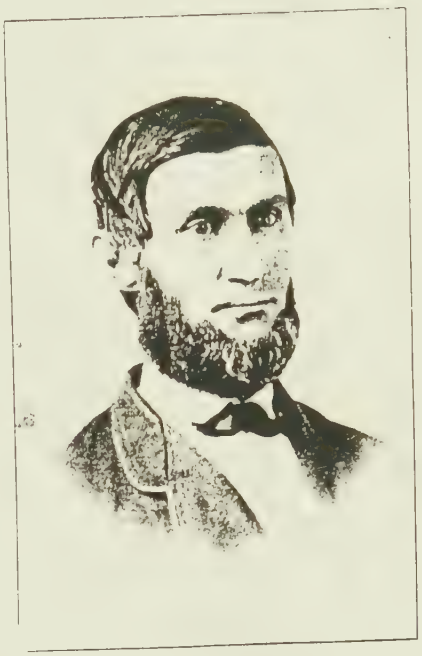
makes, and their value and importance as fire extinguishes only added to the rivalry extant. These were used until after the war when the steam engine made its appearance, and with it and a paid fire department, the old fire companies soon began declining, until all passed out of usefulness and existance.

The "Oregons" still maintain their organization, but no meeting has been held for several years. This company was probably the most prosperous company the city had, and it is due to this prosperity the organization is, in a manner, kept alive. When the steam engine relegated the laddies of the company to a state of uselessness, they possessed horses, money, property, and the present Oregon Engine House, on Fifth Street, opposite Brown Street. A Board of Trustees was elected to take care of this. This board consisted of James Turner, John Butt and A. Shinn, and they with the consent of the members of the company, used the money they had for the relief of soldiers families living in the wards where the boys composing the company lived—thus establishing the first Soldiers Relief Commission in the state. All the money secured by the sale of their horses and other property was used for this purpose. And the engine house property was turned over to the city by the company, without any consideration other than that the place must be used always as a fire house, and if not, it must be sold, and the receipts divided among the surviving members of the old Oregon Company. This is the object of keeping alive the old organization, which was the only company in the city chartered by the state.

The members of the company still alive, and whose whereabouts are known, are George Lehman, now residing in Chicago, A. Shinn, Samuel Estabrook, William Altick, William H. Finch, Isaac D. Mitchell, Joseph Mitchell, Amza Gilbert, Anthony Bartholomew, William Kleger, H. Perrine, Wm. Mc Hose, Thomas Mc Hose, Edward Whitcomb, George Goldshot, John Goldshot, William Legler, Henry Hellrigle, Geo. Wentz, J. W. Allison and Mat. Harter.

These various fire companies were supported entirely by themselves, receiving no aid whatever from the public treasury. After the Neptune Company secured a suction engine, the city allowed $150 a year to keep the machine in good repair. But beyond this, nothing was given by the city, until the steam apparatuses were purchased, and a paid department was established. This

was finally brought about, mainly through the persistent efforts of Ezra Bimm and Geo. Lehman, the former being then a member of the city council. It is due largely to his untiring efforts at that time, that something effective was accomplished, and in fact his interest in the department has never lagged, from the time he first became a volunteer fireman, at the age of fourteen, up to the present day.



FRANK EAKER
A Patron of the Independence Company.

All sorts of projects were resorted to by the different fire companies to keep up with the times and to pay expenses. They gave all sorts of entertainments, balls, fairs, sprinkled the streets, and sought subscriptions on all manner of schemes. Some of the companies had particular friends among the wealthy men of the day, and always could depend on them in grave emergencies. John W. Harries was a favored friend of all the companies, and they always could depend on him when necessity pressed them. His son, John Harries, now one of Dayton's oldest, wealthiest and best known citizens was also always a great friend of the fire laddies. He also served his time "running with the machine."

Frank Eaker was one of the leading spirits of the Independence Company, and his bank account often came to the aid of the company. His brother, William and sister, Miss Belle, were also liberal benefactors of the company. Other companies were also favored with special friends of influence, but still the burden of expense fell on the efforts of the members of the divers organizations.

The tournaments of the fire companies held at intervals in different cities throughout the state, were great events in those days. Dayton was always represented on these occasions and entered the contests. The companies always carried their own apparatus, and on one occasion, that of a great tournament at Sandusky, when the Neptune boys returned home with

the first prize, all Dayton was in glory, and for some time after this event it was an enviable honor to be a member of the Neptune Company. The firemen of the different cities of the state made periodical visits, always in full uniform, and a parade and picnic or banquet was the order of the day.

MOSES S. CROWELL.

These things continued up to the outbreak of the war, when the members of the various companies enlisted in great numbers at the first call. Cal. Childs, who was captain of the Independence Company, became captain of Co. A., 11th O. V. I., and took with him fifty-four of the boys of the fire company. It was somewhat the same with all the companies of the city, and the natural result was that all of them were partly decimated and broken up. It was here that the circumstances prevailing aided the men who were struggling to establish a paid department, and though the organizations were maintained in a way to the close of the war, with its termination came the finis of the volunteer fire companies. Probably the last big fire at which the volunteer companies of Dayton may be said to have still been intact, was the mobbing and setting on fire of the Dayton Journal Office, though even then many of the boys differed on the war question. There was some hesitancy in pulling out the engines, for fear of the mob destroying them, but when John W. Harries offered to replace them with new ones if destroyed, one after another soon were at the scene of the fire. There, the Committee of Safety, consisting of Staff. Young, Judge Haines and Henry Fowler took charge of affairs, and backed up by the soldiers, the laddies, with some annoyance and difficulty, were soon at work on the fire, leaving the soldiers to take care of the mob.

The first fire in Dayton on which a steam engine was used was at the Huston Hall fire, and some of the volunteer firemen relate with smiles how they stood over on the opposite side of the street and condemned "the thing as no good," but a little familiarity and experience with "the thing" caused them to change their minds.

THE PAID FIREMEN.

And with them came Steam Fire Engines, Horses and other Improvements.

Probably no man alive today had more to do with eliminating the old and gallant volunteer fire companies, and establishing a paid department, than Ezra Bimm. His first efforts in this direction were many years before the fact was accomplished, and they were met with opposition and derision by his fellow-volunteer firemen. He was as enthusiastic a member of the Neptune Company as there was, but the sound, hard sense that has marked his career in life, demonstrated to his satisfaction even as a boy that the change must come, and the sooner the better. But not until 1859, when he became a member of the City Council was he able to put in "telling licks," as one of the old timers expresses it, for a paid department.

EZRA BIMM

GEORGE LEHMAN

The two men who, while councilmen, were instrumental in establishing a paid department. The likenesses are from photagraphs taken when they were members of council.

Geo Lehman, also a prominent and enthusiastic volunteer fireman, with Cal. Childs and Gid. Prugh were among the first converts to the new idea,

and Lehman also breaking into council, made a strong team with Mr. Bimm. James Turner soon joined them in their ideas, and though the volunteer boys threatened to wreck any steam fire engine brought to Dayton, and it took till near the expiration of the war—sometime late in 1864—before the proper legislation was passed, their efforts were finally crowned with success, and a paid department, managed almost entirely by the "Committee on Fire" of the City Council, was established. Ezra Bimm bought the first horses for the department, and to this day takes pride in the fact that two of the boys he had appointed on the department are still members—Assistant Chief George Kirby and Henry Swalem.

The first chief appointed by the new council was Wm. Patton, and Wm. Gill, and Anthony Stephans, John H. Winder and James Lewis served in the same capacity, until in 1880 the Metropolitan force was established, and D. C. Larkin was made chief, and has held the place with credit to himself, the department and the city since that year.

During the fifteen years the department was managed by Council, it existed according to the caprice and schemes of the politicians, who either became councilmen, or who governed those who did. The consequence was progress and desired improvement was retarded, and to this fact more than any other is attributed the law creating the present Metropolitan and bi-partisan department.

THE PRESENT DEPARTMENT.

What has been Accomplished Since its Organization Twenty Years Ago.
Facts of Interest.

For several years prior to 1880 there had been serious complaint about the Fire Department—mainly because it was governed by politics, and finally in April 1880, the legislature passed an act establishing the present Metropolitan Department, which of necessity, under this act, is bi-partisan.

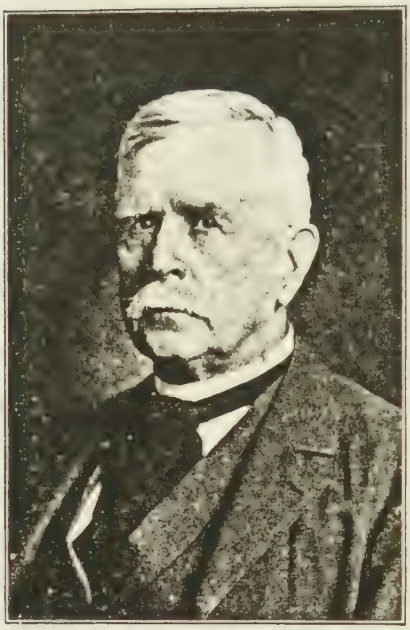
The first commissioners appointed were John S. Miles, J. Linxweiler, Jr., John K. McIntire and E. F. Pryor. The last named has been a commissioner continuously since the organization of the department, and in July will have served twenty years. The next in length of service is Mr. A. C. Nixon, who at the expiration of his present term, which expires April 15, 1891, will have served eighteen years. He and Albert Beebe were the two first commissioners appointed after the organization of the metropolitan department. Then followed Joseph Kratochwill, who served to his death, from 1883 to 1887. Michael A. Nipgen was appointed July 5, 1886, and at the expiration of his present term, July 5, 1902, will have served sixteen consecutive years. Charles H. Ware was appointed in 1888, and his successor, Charles Francisco was chosen in April, 1900.

There is not a man who has served on the commission, but what has proven himself a credit to the office, and the same is predicted and expected of the new member.

The first commissioners upon assuming control of the department in 1880, made this statement to the public in their first report :

"Upon assuming the management of the department, the board found it without a chief officer, themselves inexperienced, and a general reorganization imperative. The houses in many cases were needing repairs. New hose was needed. The number of horses were not sufficient to move the apparatus, and in many respects the department was greatly in need of immediate

THE PRESENT FIRE COMMISSION.

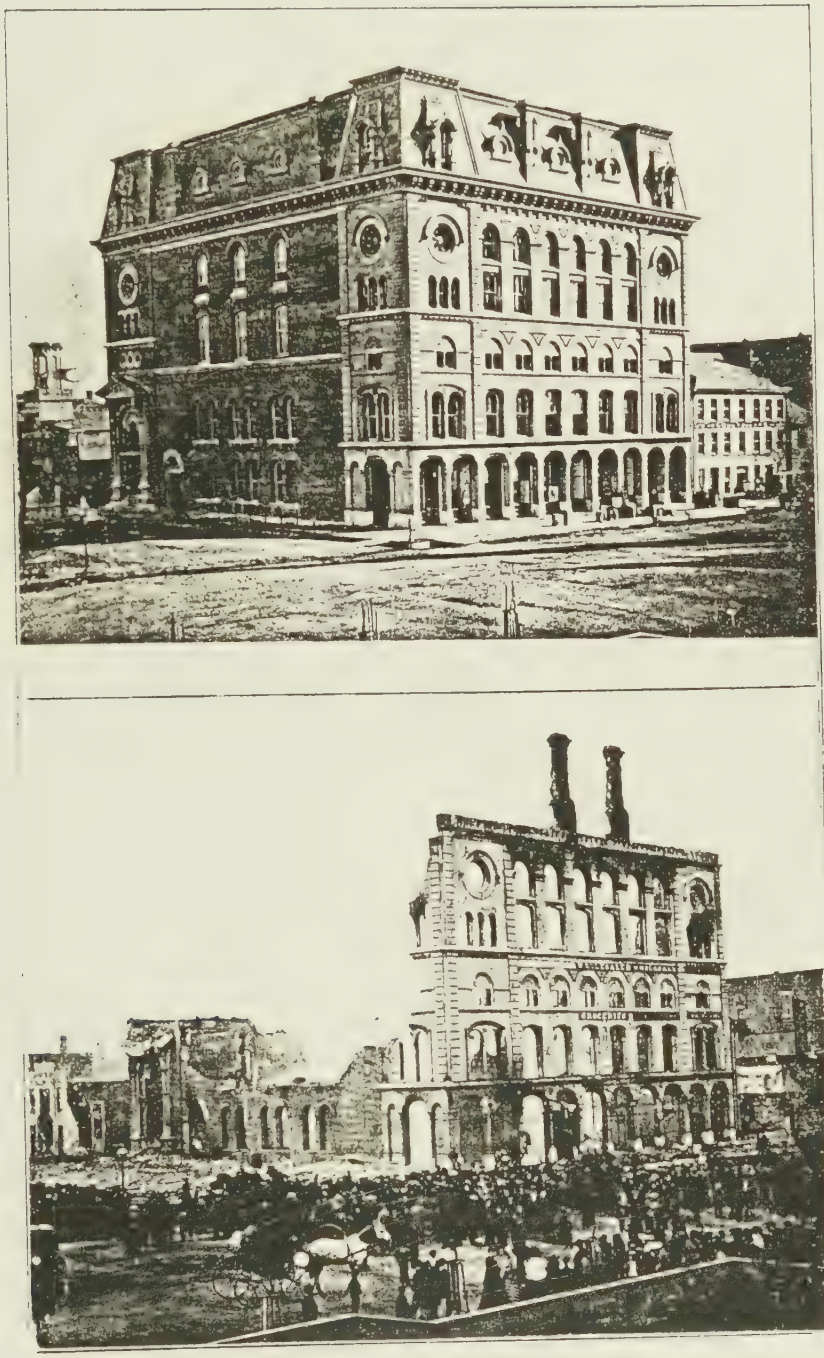


E. F. PRYOR

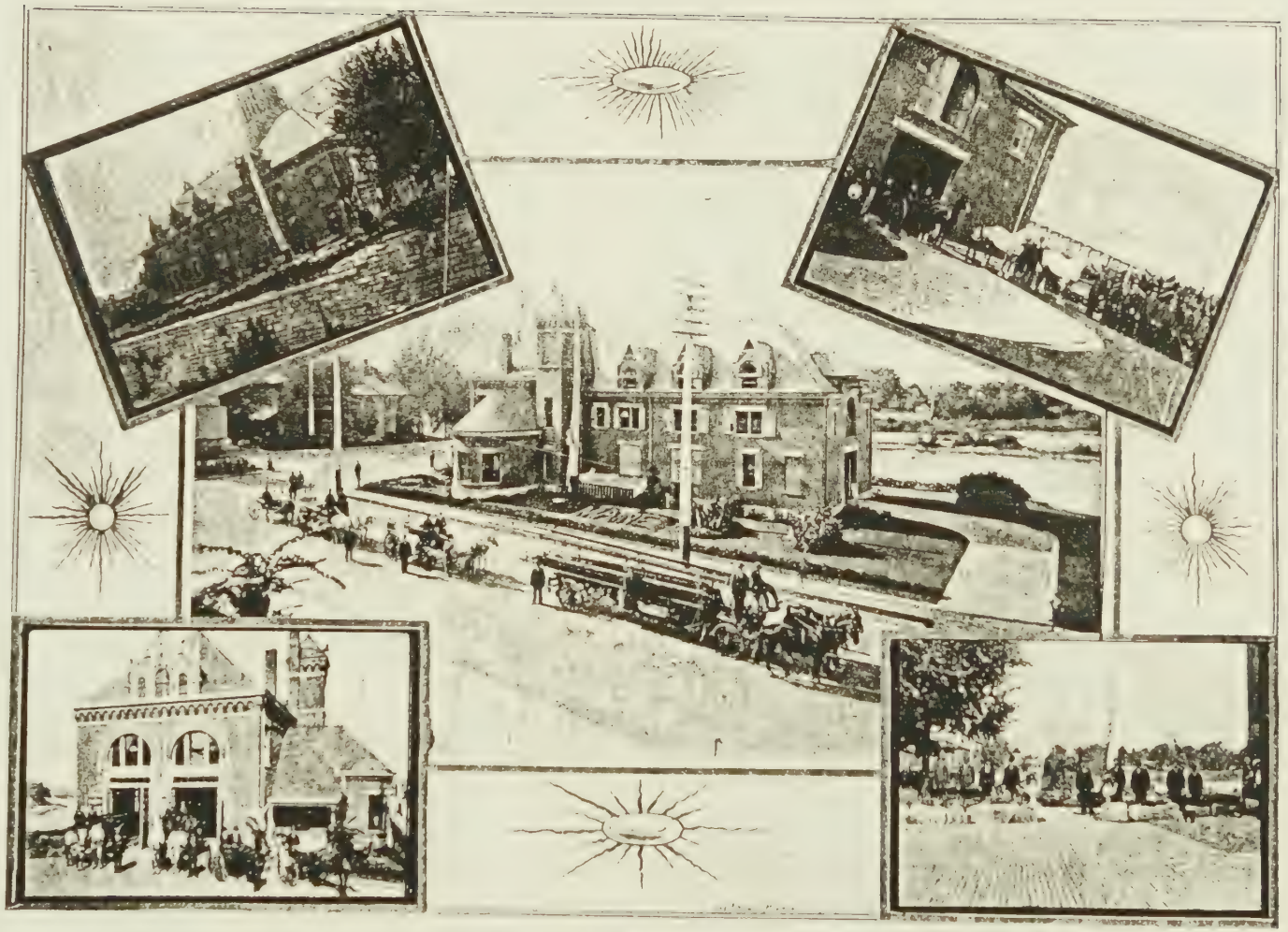
A. C. NIXON

M. A. NIPGEN

CHAS. C. FRANCISCO



Dayton's Greatest Fire—Turner Opera House, May 10, 1869.



MAIN STREET HOSE HOUSE.

improvement. The Committee on Fire Department of Council doubtless realized this state of affairs, as fully as we, but were as helpless financially, as we, to remedy the evil, and with less authority under the law, to raise funds for present wants

* * * * * * * * * * *

"It has been the aim of the commissioners, as fast as possible, to effect a thorough discipline throughout the department; to get the department out of politics, and away from its influences; to encourage the men to make the business of a fireman a permanent one during efficient services and good behavior."

FRANK B. RAMBY, Assistant Chief

GEORGE W. KIRBY, Assistant Chief

The first year of the metropolitan department, Council cut the levy for fire purposes, resulting in the department getting $2,000 less than the last year, it was conducted by a committee of Council, and yet they managed to make considerable improvements, and to add five men to the department. The improvements have been continuous from that day to this, always dependent on the money granted the department by the Council, and later, the Tax Commission, B. C. A. and Council. The principles enunciated by the first commission appointed have never been lost sight of, and are carried out with

this as much determination today as in the beginning, and to this fact as much as any other is attributed the advanced condition the department now enjoys.

Today it is the possessor of about $202,000 worth of property, is much better equipped, comparison, than twenty years ago, but still is without many necessities for fighting fires, such as the city now with her extensive structures, is at any time liable to have. The present truck and ladder outfit is entirely inadequate for the tall buildings in the city, and while the city is fairly well mained with water, there are sections, thickly built up, where the mains are too small to maintain a pressure, with several lines of hose in use, to be effective on a serious fire; hence the necessity for a powerful engine. These two instances are here cited only as a means of showing the disadvantages the departmennt has and is laboring under, and to convey to one's mind the degree of efficiency the department is entitled to, in spite of these disadvantages. A fire well started, with a high wind to fan it, in the neighborhood of the Malleable Iron Works, would place the department in desperate straits, because of the condition here cited, and there are other just as valuable property jeopardized by the same means.

The Department for the past few years has numbered from seventy-two to seventy-eight men, substitutes and relief men included, and has been conducted economically, the cost averaging about $65,000 per year. The following is the personnel of the department at present: Commissioners, E. F. Pryor, M. A. Nipgen, A. C. Nixon and Charles C. Francisco.

Daniel C. Larkin, Chief, Frank B. Ramby and George W. Kirby, Assistant Chiefs.

HOUSE No. 1—CENTRAL.
Stephen Green, Captain.
Harry Engle.
Edward Madigan.
Henry Harbarger.
George Nienabor.
George Griesmeyer.
August Fisher.

HOUSE No. 2—EASTERN.
John Korns, Captain.
Charles Click.
Frank Sumerhalter.
Frank Hagedorn.
Andrew Poock.
William Cunnigham.
Ellsworth Harrington.
William Flanigan.
Paul Daly.
Christopher Sherry.
William Cain.

HOUSE No. 3—WESTERN.
Charles Tuhey, Captain.
Luther Garwood.
William Gerkins.
Robert Lally.
Edward McKenny.
William Loeb.
Michael Gavin.
Clyde Vanden.
Henry Dietrich.
Edward Geisler.
Albert Crew.
Joseph Barnwell.
Charles McKenzie.

HOUSE No. 4—MAIN STREET.
O. K. Cotterman, Captain.
Thos. Hoban.
Thos. Lawler.
Charles Wagner.
William Clark.
Peter Caulfield.
Lupton Walton.
Jones Hash.

HOUSE No. 5—BAXTER STREET.
Thos. Taylor.
John Corson.
Gilbert Reilly.
James Staley.

HOUSE No. 6—JUNE STREET.
Daniel Kallaher, Captain.
Elmer Mackrodt.
Charles Kalbfleisch.
William Lumby.
Jos. Byrne.
William Silzell.
Michael Holhahn.

HOUSE No. 7—XENIA AVENUE.
John Sheehy.
George Coy.
John Morrissey.
William Hunter.

HOUSE No. 8—VALLEY STREET.
Daniel Maloney.
William Plunkett.
Herman Koepnick.
James Grady.

HOUSE No. 9—DAYTON VIEW.
Edward Doudna.
Jos. Huesman.
William Culbert.
Charles Ferris.

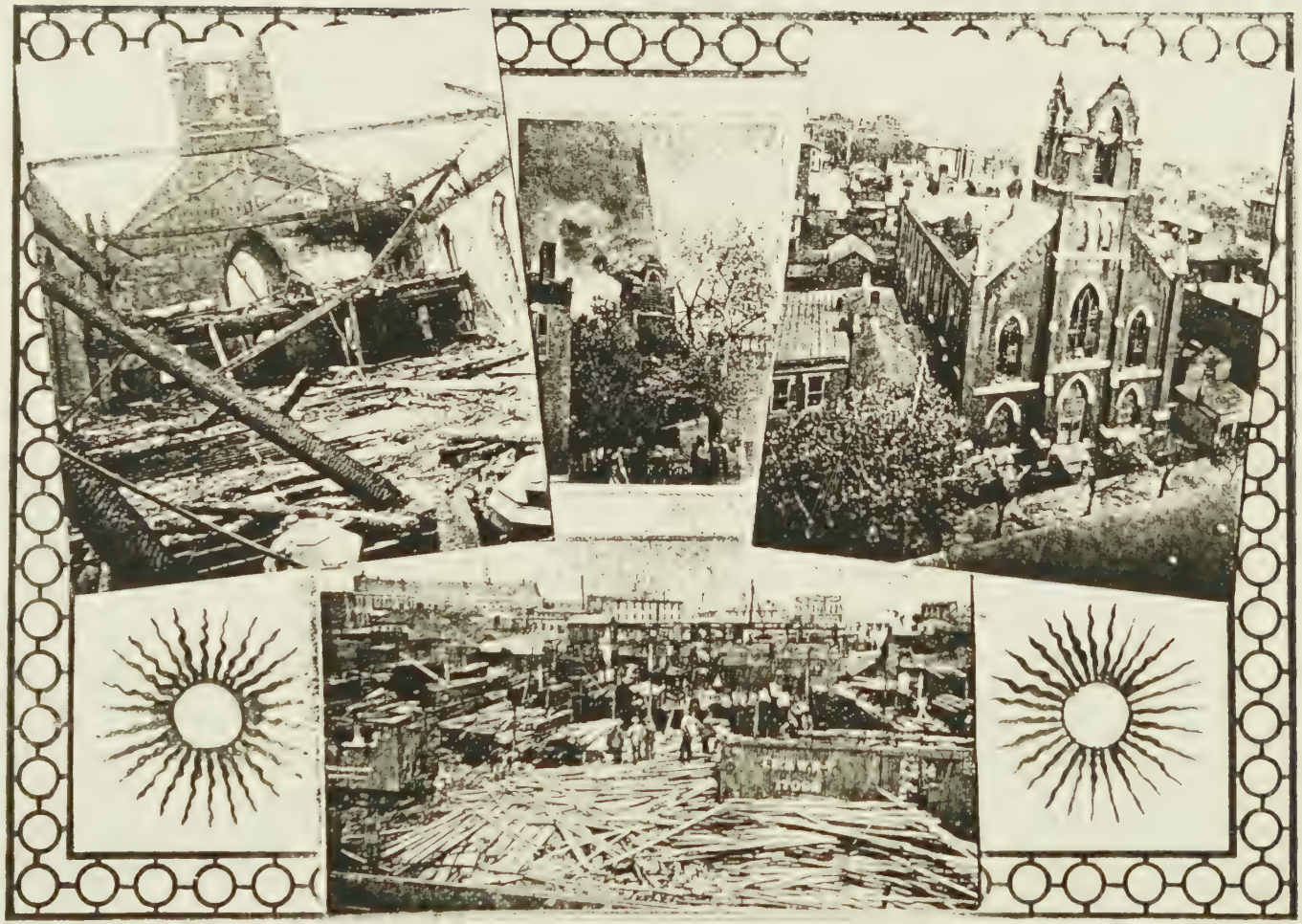
HOUSE No. 10—EDGEMONT.
Charles Taylor.
William Kramer.
Robert Donoghue.
William Eckert.

HOUSE No. 11—SOUTH PARK.
Michael McCarthy.
Lawrence Kirchner.
Albert Fiorini.
Henry Swalem.

HOUSE No. 12—LINDEN AVENUE.
Daniel Wolfrath.
Charles Samuels.
Michael Caulfield.
Anthony Boga.

EXCHANGE OPERATORS.
Charles Murphy.
Matthew Gitzinger.
William Hughey.

The efficiency of the department is best understood by the reputation it bears for prompt and effective work. No department in Ohio stands higher with the insurance companies and persons whose business is such as to compel an interest on their part in the fire departments. In the twenty years, since the



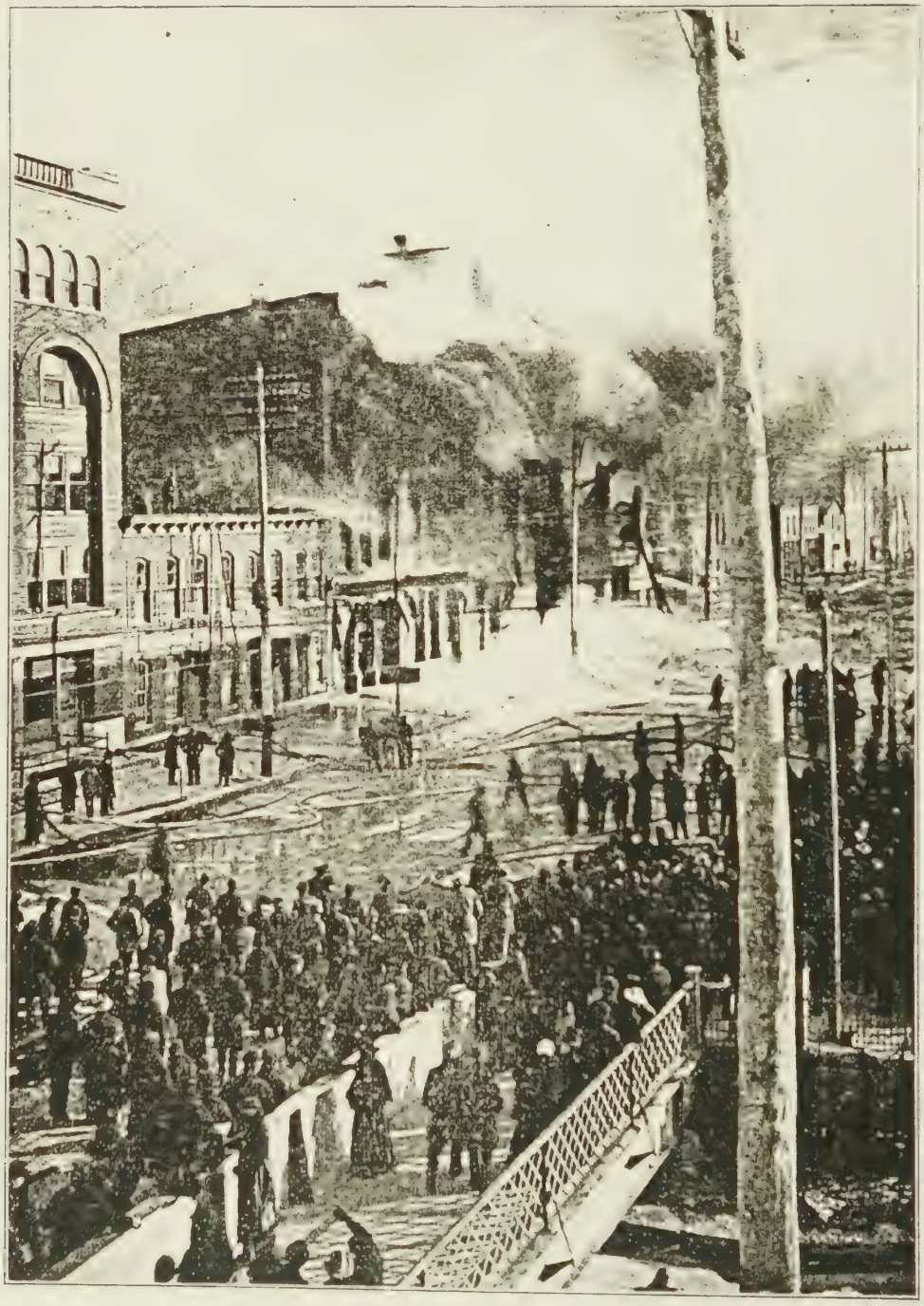
GEBHART LUMBER YARD AND ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH FIRE, APRIL 30, 1899.

organization of the present regime, Dayton has had 3728 fires, an average of 189 each year. During the past five years the number of fires has increased greatly, the number being as great as in fifteen years preceeding 1895. From 1880 to 1895 the city suffered from 1904 fires, of all kinds, descriptions and magnitude, and since then there have been 1824 fires, 330 in 1895, 353 in 1896, 207 in 1897, 304 in 1898, 323 in 1899 and 307 in 1900. These dates comprehend the fiscal year, ending with March 31st.

The loss on the fires for the first period mentioned was $683,402.76, and for the latter $883,387.94, of which nearly three-fourths occured during the year here specified as 1900. The insurance involved in these fires aggregated about $12,000,000, and in many instances, there was no insurance carried, such cases amounting to about $50,000 in the twenty years of the department's existence.

The years 1899 and 1900, covering the fiscal year from March to March, was the most destructive Dayton has ever experienced, exceeding in total loss that of 1869. The great First Street fire, the two fires at Gebhart's Lumber Yard, the first also resulting in the destruction of the St. John's German Evangelical Lutheran Church on Third Street; the Dayton Spice Mills fire, the Globe Planing Mill fire, and others of lesser importance occurred within this year, bringing the per capita loss, estimating the population of the city at 90,000, to nearly $6.00. This was only exceeded once before, in 1869, when, because of the difference in population the per capita loss was greater, but the total loss less than the past year.

It is quite probable Dayton will lead the list in losses for the year, but it is the dark chapter of the departments history. The following shows the average per capita loss of nine of the leading cities of Ohio, for the five years from 1889 to 1894. Akron, $3.80; Cleveland, $2.84; Cincinnati, $2.90; Columbus, $4.89; Dayton, $.88; Springfield, $1.81; Toledo, $4.57; Youngstown, $.95; Zanesville, $2.37:



THE GREAT FIRST STREET FIRE.

The following table shows the efficiency of the department, as compared with other cities, giving the average per capita loss for the past five years. They are compiled by the statistical committee of the National Board of Underwriters, and are accepted as officially correct:

	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898
Akron	$ 3.74	$2.54	$2.41	$1.34	$3.41
Canton	.....	.....	1.12	1.44	2.10
Cincinnati	1.63	2.11	1.14	1.89	1.21
Cleveland	1.51	1.41	1.24	1.48	1.33
Columbus	2.05	3.85	.....	.86	.46
Dayton	.84	.25	.74	.37	1.10
Springfield	3.33	1.85	.17	.18	.34
Toledo	10.90	2.19	2.07	1.56	4.73
Youngstown	.81	.85	.83	2.44	.60
Zanesville	.....	2.62	.40	1.28	.72

These figures show the total average per capita loss in Dayton for five years to be 66 cents per year, as against $1.10 for Youngstown and $1.17 for Springfield for the same years, they being the two next lowest. Toledo's per capita loss for five years $4.29; Columbus, $1.80; Cincinnati, $1.59; and Cleveland, $1.39. The levy for fire protection in all these cities exceeds that of Dayton greatly. In Toledo, the expense of their department for the past five years has exceeded $150,000. This city has the benefit of a law providing for not less than two and one-half mills levy for fire purposes, while Dayton's average for the past few years, including the present levy is one and one-half mills, giving the department about $65,000, as against Toledo's $150,000. In Columbus—these three cities, Columbus, Toledo and Dayton, ranking together, though Dayton surpasses both in point of manufacturing, and consequently probable large fires—the department exceeds $200,000 in its annual expense.

Detroit, which is given credit for possessing the best and most efficient fire department in the country, has only twice in the past twenty years had a lower annual per capita loss than Dayton, and the per capita expense is twice as great.

SCENES FROM THE GREAT FIRST STREET FIRE.

The following taken from the report of the Committee on Statistics of the National Board of Fire Underwriters, covering eleven cities of the country, that rank with Dayton in size and population, presents an interesting array of facts bearing on the efficiency of the Dayton Department. The population of the cities is from 75,000 to 110,000, and the per capita loss is given for the two last years reported, 1898 and 1899.

	1899	1898
Los Angeles, Cal.	$ 2.80	$ 1.30
Hartford, Conn.	.87	.94
Evansville, Ind.	1.00	.72
Des Moines, Iowa	1.60	1.21
Cambridge, Mass.	2.54	.55
Grand Rapids, Mich.	1.12	.48
Reading, Pa.	1.32	1.07
Houston, Texas	2.25	1.54
Salt Lake City, Utah	1.20	1.74
Troy, N. Y.	.65	1.87
Dayton	1.10	.37

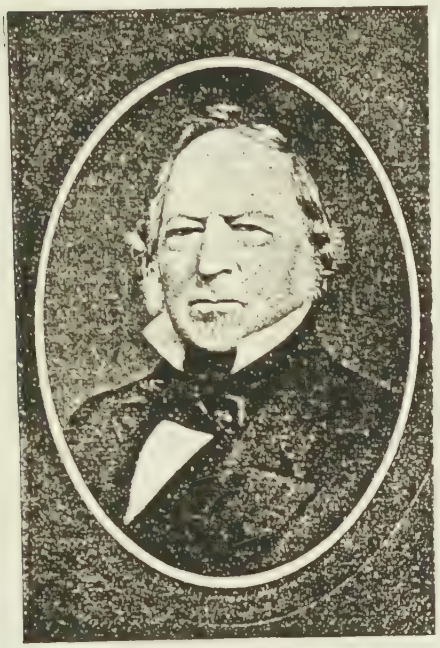
When the present regime was inaugerated in 1880, there were nineteen men serving as firemen for the city. Before the close of the year the number was increased to twenty-eight, and year after year, as the growth of the city required it, more men, houses and apparatus were added, until now the membership numbers seventy-six, with two vacancies to fill, there are twelve fire houses, all moderately well equipped, excepting the large central houses, where, as heretofore stated, more improved and larger apparatus is needed, two more fire houses are to be added, one in Miami City, and the other in Riverdale, as soon as they can be erected. The plans are all perfected, and they will be erected before the end of the year, when several additional firemen will be added to the force.

A law was passed by the last legislature, increasing the pay of Dayton firemen, but it is a law that remains inoperative until such time as the municipal authorities see fit to put it in operation by providing the necessary money the increase demands.

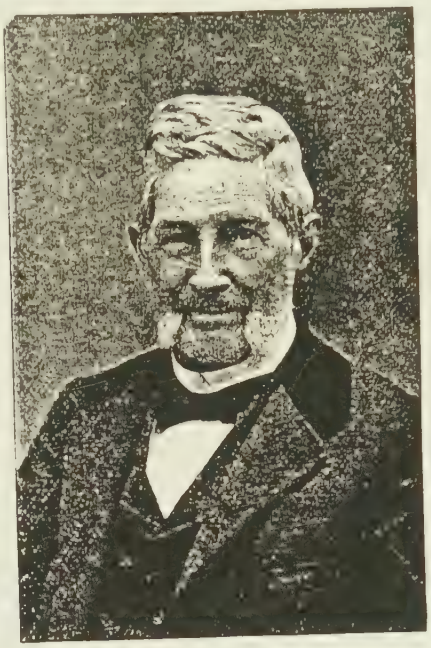
Among the men now in service: Robert Donoghue, stationed at the Edgemont House, has been the longest in continuous service—twenty-five years, though George W. Kirby and Henry Swalem were firemen some years

previous to Donoghue's appointment. They however left the department at different times, but always drifted back again. They are both considered among the most valued men on the force. William Culbert, stationed at the Dayton View House is another "old timer" and valued man, having served twenty-one years continuously, and next to him is Chief Larkin, who in July will have completed his twentieth year. There are a number of the men who have put in ten years or more in the service.

FATHER AND SON.



JOHN W. HARRIES.



JOHN HARRIES

The above are the likenesses of two men than whom none have been better known in and about Dayton for more than half a century. Both have always been influential friends of the Dayton Fire Department from its very infancy. In the old volunteer days before the war, none of the divers companies ever got into financial difficulties, but what John W. Harries always came to the rescue, and probably John Harries, the son, imbibed his friendliness for the fire laddies from the father. As a young man he "ran with the machine," and when the company he belonged to disbanded, he never failed to indorse improvements, and to use his influence for the betterment of the department.

It was the father, John W. Harries who cut a very important figure in affairs before and during the war. It is related of him, that when the mob attacked and fired the Dayton Journal Office, and the volunteer companies refused to run out their apparatus, as the mob threatened to destroy them, he sent messengers to all the companies appealing to them to run to the fire and offering to replace at his own expense, all apparatus that was damaged. This settled the matter, and soon afterwards all the companies were on hand at the fire. Many kindnesses extended by John W. Harries are still remembered by the old timers.

CHARLES H. WARE.

Charles H. Ware, who retired from the Board of Fire Commissioners in May, after 12 years of continuous service, was a valued member of the board. His retirement was chiefly due to political animosities engendered by his fearless course as a commissioner, but those who are the more familiar with the affairs and needs of the department always esteemed him as a valuable member, and regret the fact that he was retired. He is a man of few words, but careful, considerate, and very positive when he once reaches a conclusion.

He has the respect and esteem of all the members of the department, and the business people generally.

DAYTON'S BIGGEST FIRES.

But Two of them Reached Enormous Sums. Several Instances of Loss of Life.

Dayton has been fortunate in that she has suffered very few great conflagrations, when considered from the standpoint of financial loss. There have been instances of fierce fires, difficult to manage, but the loss invariably has been kept at the lowest possible notch.

The greatest fire the city ever suffered was the Turner Opera House fire, on the corner of Main and First streets, where the Victoria Theatre now stands. The loss there exceeded that of the great fire on east First street, in 1900, by more than $75,000. The last mentioned was the second greatest fire in point of financial loss, but the burning of the Winthrop House, which stood on Ludlow street, near Fourth, resulted in the loss of two lives, and the burning of the Eighth Ward House, which stood on south Main street, near Washington street, in the death of a mother and five children. The former occurred in 1869, shortly after the great Opera House fire, where one life was also lost, and the latter a year later. In neither of the last cases was the financial loss very great.

The following is a complete record of the large fires Dayton has suffered for the past thirty-six years:

June 16, 1864, Zwick, Bookwalter & Co.'s hub and spoke factory, located on the corner of Third and Wayne avenue. It occurred at midnight, and was always thought to have been set on fire. The loss was $16,000.

July 26, 1865, T. A. Phillips' cotton factory, located where the Computing Scale Co.'s factory now is, was destroyed. Loss, $12,000.

March 8, 1866, Babbitt's residence, corner First and Bridge streets, was destroyed, the result of an accident with a lamp. Loss, $6,000.

June 4, 1867, the Montgomery House, Third street and the canal, was burned. The fire originated from an accident. Loss, $5,000.

February 2, 1868, at the corner of Third and Jefferson streets, J. R. Paullis' livery stable, D. Meyers' clothing store, J. Payne's fruit store, Rott & Kropp, clothing, Reeves, jeweler, Stauffer & Weckesser, clothing, and P. Hern's billiard hall were burned out. The loss was $24,000, and the fire supposed to have been incendiary.

May 21, 1868, the Tower Varnish Works, on the upper hydraulic were set on fire and destroyed. Loss $6,000.

August 6, 1868, Thresher's Varnish Store on Third Street, between Jefferson and St. Clair Street, was destroyed. Loss $5,000.

January 29, 1869, Crawford & Coffman's Peg and Last Factory, located just east of Fifth Street, along the railroad, was damaged by an accidental fire to the extent of $5,000.

May 16, 1869, date of Dayton's greatest fire—The Turner Opera House. It was discovered after one o'clock in the morning, two hours after a performance, and an hour later had spread over the entire neighborhood. The Opera House Building, the finest in the city at that time, Turner's rectifying house, Schwab's, Estabrook's and A. Kuhn's residence, all on First Street, and M. Ohmer's building on Main Street, occupied by himself and Herman Sandmeier's Grocery, were destroyed. The Opera House contained a wholesale grocery, wholesale china establishment, sewing machine agency and Lange's restaurant. All were destroyed, the loss reaching $550,000.

Herman Sandmeier lost his life in attempting to save some of his goods. A piece of falling timber caught and held him to the floor, and he was held there until burned to death.

Assistant Chief Kirby and Henry Swalem are the only two men now in the department, who took part in fighting that fire. Kirby volunteered to rescue Sandmeier, and entered the burning building with Patrick Garrity, with a rope to fasten about the big piece of timber lying on Sandmeier, in the hope the people on the outside could pull it off the unfortunate man, so that he and Garrity could carry him out while yet alive. He got the rope adjusted, but the timber was so wedged in it could not be moved, and when the walls began falling Kirby gave the signal to pull. He got out in the open, but Garrity fell unconscious, when Kirby rushed back, picked him up, and managed to carry and drag him far enough to the outside for others to aid him, when he also succumbed to the heat, smoke and exhaustion. Both men were laid up with their injuries from being struck by parts of the falling walls for some time. Garrity has since died.

May 20, 1869, just four days later, Dayton recorded another fatal fire—that of the Winthrop House, then on Ludlow Street, between Third and

Fourth Streets. The fire occured at night, while the guests were asleep. One man was burned to death, and nine other persons seriously injured one of whom died the next day. The hotel was destroyed; loss $12,000.

October 18, 1869, the Hominy and Grist Mill then at the foot of Ludlow Street was set on fire and destroyed. Loss $6,000.

February 17, 1870, the firemen were called to the B. C. Taylor, Western Shops, then located near the corner of Fifth and Perry Streets. A fire was in progress, but was easily controlled. But the building was a complete wreck. The boiler had exploded, and the structure collapsed, killing five of the workmen and injuring nine others. Loss $25,000.

May 28, 1870, the Eighth Ward House, then on Main Street, near Washington Street, was destroyed by fire at night. The structure was a massive frame building used as a boarding house, tenement house and grocery. The fire was attributed to carelessness. It spread rapidly, but was quickly controlled, and the loss was estimated at only $2,000, but when it was all over. a mother and her five children were all found dead in their rooms, burned and smothered to death.

July 19, 1870, Stewart & Co's, Sash, Door and Blind Factory on Wayne Avenue and the Canal was set on fire and destroyed. Loss $25,000.

September 30, 1870, Bidleman's Tannery, located on McDonough Street, near Third Street was destroyed. Loss $6,000.

January 6, 1871, the Beckel House was discovered on fire over the kitchen. A panic ensued, and a number of guests were injured, but none fatally. Loss $6,500.

January 18, 1871, O'Dell's Book Bindery on Jefferson Street, near Third and a number of offices were destroyed. Loss $7,000.

June 9. 1871, an alarm of fire during a terrific storm called the department to the German Lutheran Church, on east Third Street. There was no fire, but the church was destroyed by the storm. Three persons were killed and a number of others injured. A bridge north of the city was also destroyed, and two boys killed.

There was no detailed record of fires kept for the years 1872 and 1873, but no great fires occured. The total loss for the two years amounted to $83,000.

May 13, 1874, Gebhart & Co's Bagging Factory on the upper hydraulic

EASTERN ENGINE COMPANY.

1. WILLIAM CAIN. 2. WILLIAM FLANIGAN. 3. ELLSWORTH HARRINGTON.
4. PAUL DALY 5. WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM. 6. FRANK HAGEDORN.
7. FRANK SUMERHALTER. 8. CHARLES CLICK. 9. ANDREW POOCK,
10. CHRISTOPHER SHERRY. 11. JOHN KORNS, Captain,

was destroyed by an accidental fire. Loss $6,600.

August 19, 1874, Burkhardt & Mack's Packing House in North Dayton was destroyed by upsetting a candle. Loss $7,000.

January 12, 1875, DeCamp Bros' Carriage Factory, G. B. Lyman & Co's Table Slide Factory and Berk & Waymire's Undertaking Establishment, on Fifth Street were destroyed.

April 10, 1875, Lautenschlager & Co's Furniture Factory, located on Second Street, near the Canal was destroyed. Loss $7,000.

July 5, 1875, Bruggeman's Livery Stable on Second Street was burned, and the horses and carriages of a number of wealthy families were destroyed.

August 15, 1876, the First Presbyterian Church, corner Second and Ludlow Streets was destroyed. Loss $16,000

September 25, 1876, Adam Schantz Slaughter House on River Street was destroyed by the explosion of a tank of lard.

November 7, 1877, Crawford, Coffman & Co's Peg and Last Factory on Shawnee Street was destroyed by the agency of a hot journal.

September 17, 1878, Mead & Nixon's Paper Mill on the upper hydraulic was damaged to the extent of $10,000.

April 4, 1879, J. R. Johnson's Machine Shop and I. L. Baker's Sealing Wax Factory on Wayne Avenue and the Railroad were destroyed. Loss $40,000.

November 7, 1879, W. P. Callahan's Shops on east Third Street were damaged to the extent of $8,000 by the explosion of a gas stove.

March 18, 1880, Gebhart, Pope & Co's Linseed Oil Mill was damaged to the extent of $8,000.

May 20, 1880, R. R. Dickey's large power building, First and Mill Streets, occupied by Thos. Nixon's Paper Bag Factory, Wolf & Co's Tobacco Warehouse, and the Ansonia Stove Co. was destroyed. Loss $30,000.

July 17, 1881, Schiml's Brewery & Ice House, Wayne Avenue and Hickory Street, were destroyed.

September 1, 1881, the Farmer's Friend Mfg. Co. suffered a $30,000 fire from spontaneous combustion.

September 10, 1881, the Baptist Church that stood on the corner of Fifth and Wayne Avenue, with six houses and five stables were destroyed. Just twelve days later a similar fire occured in the same section, when three houses

WESTERN ENGINE COMPANY.

1. CLYDE VANDEN.
2. EDWARD McKENNY.
3. JOSEPH BARNWELL.
4. ROBERT LALLY.
5. ALBERT CREW.
6. CHARLES McKENZIE.
7. EDWARD GEISLER.
8. WILLIAM LOEB.
9. WILLIAM GERKINS.
10. MICHAEL GAVIN.
11. LUTHER GARWOOD.
12. CHAS. TUHEY, Capt.
13. HENRY DIETRICH.

and two stables were destroyed. Both fires are thought to have been from incendiary causes.

October 26, 1881, the explosion of a boiler at Pineo & Daniel's Spoke Factory, First and Madison Streets, resulted in four deaths and several being wounded.

March 18, 1882, R. R. Dickey's three story structure on Third Street, just east of Jefferson Street, occupied by M. B. Parmely's Dry Goods Store and William Kiefaber & Bro's Fruit Store, was destroyed. Loss $42,000.

March 13, 1883, the four story building corner of St. Clair and Third Streets, occupied by Sachs & Pruden's Drug Store, S. F. and G. A. Gebhart and Chas. Wuichet & Co. was damaged to the extent of $10,000.

November 3, 1884, the T. C. and St. L. Round House on east First Street was destroyed by a lamp dropping into the waste receptacle. Loss $14,000.

July 23, 1884, John Dodds' Rake Factory, Stephen Wolf's house and stable Dittman's house and stable, M. F. Fackler's house and stable, Mrs. S. Heige's house and stable, Joseph Clark's stable and woodshed, J. Landis' stable and O. A. Crabb's stable were destroyed. The fire started by a spark from a locomotive. Loss $26,000.

December 16, 1884, G. Stomps & Co's Chair Factory, corner of First and Canal, was damaged. Cause of fire unknown. Loss $14,000.

January 20, 1885, Reynolds & Reynolds' Book Bindery, located then on the corner of Second and Jefferson Streets, was destroyed. Loss $25,000. Accident.

June 23, 1885, Lowe Bros. Paint Store on east Third Street, was damaged. Cause spontaneous combustion. Loss $3,000.

April 24, 1886, Cattle Pens of the Syrup Refining Co., foot of Cincinnati Street were destroyed. Cause unknown. Loss $8,000.

August 6, 1886, C. L. Hawes Ware House in North Dayton was destroyed. Cause incendiary. Loss $6,000.

October 9, 1886, stables belonging to Kramer & Wilson, Andrew Waters and Wm. H. Wilson, on Shartel and Pulaski Streets, were destroyed by an incendiary fire. Loss $3,000.

December 7, 1886, DeWeese & Bidleman's Dry Goods Store on Third Street was damaged to the extent of $3,500. Cause of fire unknown.

December 8, 1886, Focke & Sons Slaughter House on Springfield Pike, was set on fire by the upsetting of a lamp. Loss $10,000.

BAXTER STREET HOSE COMPANY

1. JAMES STALEY. 2. THOS. TAYLOR. 3. JOHN CORSON.
4. GILBERT REILLY.

CENTRAL ENGINE COMPANY.

1. AUGUST FISHER. 2. HENRY HARBARGER. 3. GEORGE NIENABOR.
4. GEORGE GRIESMEYER. 5. EDWARD MADIGAN. 6. HARRY ENGLE.
7. STEPHEN GREEN, Captain.

December 15, 1886, Dayton Spice Co., then on north Main Street, suffered a $14,000 loss.

December 17, 1886, Wight & Sons' Saw Mills, at the junction of Star and Canal Streets, were destroyed. Loss $8,000.

January 18, 1887, McHose & Lyon's Shops, at the foot of Ludlow Street, were destroyed. Loss $11,000.

August 6, 1887, C. P. Palmer's Flour Mill in Dayton View, was destroyed. Loss $17,000.

November 12, 1887, Schaeffer & Mumma's Grain Elevator on Perry Street, destroyed. Loss $5,000.

January 5, 1888, G. Stomps & Co's Chair Factory on First Street, was set on fire from a gas jet. Loss $8,000.

April 23, 1889, the Barney Block on Fifth Street, occupied by F. Cappel, was damaged to the extent of $5,000. Cause spontaneous combustion.

April 24, 1889, the Lumber Yards of A. Gebhart & Co. on Wayne Avenue, were damaged to the extent of $5,000.

May 12, 1889, N. Thomas' Brewery, corner of First and Beckel, caught fire from the smoke stack, incuring a loss of $10,000.

June 3, 1889, Pierce & Coleman's Lumber Sheds on Dutoit Street, were set on fire. Loss $8,000.

July 3, 1889, Tivoli Hall on east Fifth Street, was destroyed. Loss $9,000.

September 12, 1889, J. R. Brownell & Co's., Foundry and Machine Shops on east First Street, were destroyed. Loss $21,000.

April 30, 1890, stable, carriage shed and warerooms of Micheal Walter's, stables belonging to Mrs. Hahne and Katherine Zwisler on Franklin Street. Loss $5,200.

November 13, 1890, Dayton Spice Mills, corner of First and Foundry Sts., suffered a loss of $9,000. Cause unknown.

December 30, 1890, a Natural Gas Explosion at Gem City Stove Co's Shops in the east end, resulted in a loss $11,500.

May 2, 1891, Leidigh Buggy Co., on Front Street, suffered a $7,000 loss from a fire caused by spontaneous combustion.

February 18, 1892, Jas. McIntire, Candy Manufacturer, on Second Street, suffered a loss of $6,000. Cause unknown.

MAIN STREET HOSE COMPANY.

1. JONES HASH.
2. PETER CAULFIELD.
3. CHAS. WAGNER.
4. O. K. COTTERMAN, Capt.
5. WILLIAM CLARK.
6. LUPTON WALTON.
7. THOS. HOBAN
8. THOS. LAWLER.

XENIA AVENUE HOSE COMPANY.

1. WILLIAM HUNTER. 2. JOHN SHEEHY. 3. JOHN MORRISSEY. 4. GEORGE COY

March 14, 1892, Dayton Whip Co., located along the Canal in the Gebhart Power Building, was destroyed by fire. Loss $12,500.

June 4, 1892, the shops of C. W. Raymond & Co, First and Webster Sts., were destroyed. Loss $9,000.

January 18, 1893, Natural Gas caused a fire in the store of A. W. Gump, on east Third Street. Loss $7,500.

June 16, 1893, Bauer & Forster, located on east Third Street, suffered a loss of $7,500. Fire caused by Electric Light.

December 16, 1893, the Dayton Carmel Co., on Bacon Street, was destroyed by fire. Cause unknown. Loss $35,000.

February 11, 1894, the Linseed Oil Mill of H. L. Pape & Co., on Canal Street, was destroyed. Cause, friction in machinery. Loss $13,000.

March 4, 1894, the Clothing Store of Phillip Brown, located on south Jefferson Street, was destroyed. Loss $10,000. Cause unknown.

July 23, 1894, Aull Bro's. Paper Warehouse, located on east Second Street, was destroyed by spontaneous combustion. Loss $12,500.

December 13, 1894, the Famous Laundry, located on the foot of Ludlow Street, was destroyed by spontaneous combustion. Loss $8,000.

August 8, 1895, F. A. Requarth Co., located on Pine Street, was destroyed. Loss $5,000.

June 27, 1896, the Standard Sign Co., corner of Fourth and St. Clair Sts., was destroyed. Cause spontaneous combustion. Loss $5,500.

April 5, 1897, the Phillips Hotel was set on fire by a gasoline explosion. A panic ensued among the guests, and one person was fatally injured. Loss $18,000.

February 7, 1898, the Bradley Cordage Co. on Huffman Avenue, was set on fire by a spark from a picking machine. Loss $30,000.

March 23, 1898, the Craig-Reynolds Co. plant in North Dayton, was damaged to the extent of $13,500 by fire, originating from an acetylene gas explosion.

April 18, 1898, Samuel Margolis' Dry Goods and Notion establishment, on south Jefferson Street, was set on fire. Loss $12,500.

May 26, 1898, the Sweetman Printing Company was burned out by an

DAYTON VIEW HOSE COMPANY.

1. JOS. HUESMAN. 2. CHARLES FERRIS. 3. WILLIAM CULBERT.
4. EDWARD DOUDNA.

JUNE STREET ENGINE COMPANY.

1. CHARLES KALBFLEISCH. 2. MICHAEL HOLHAHN. 3. WILLIAM LUMBY.
4. WILLIAM SILZELL. DANIEL KALLAHER, Captain. 6. JOS. BYRNE.
7. ELMER MACKRODT.

incendiary fire. Loss $7,500. August 14, 1898, the Pasteur-Chamberland Filter Co. was destroyed. Loss $20,000. Cause unknown.

April 30, 1899, the Lumber Yards of A. Gebhart & Co. on Wayne Ave., was set on fire by a spark from a passing locomotive. A high wind prevailed, and sparks from this fire set the St. John's Lutheran Church on Third Street afire, totally destroying it. The loss to A. Gebhart & Co. was $15,000 and to the Church $19,600.

July 15, 1899, the Globe Plaining Mills on the west side, were destroyed. Loss $13,000.

October 7, 1899, Dayton Spice Mills Co. in the extreme east end, was badly damaged. Loss $12,800.

January 30, 1900, A. Gebhart & Co's Lumber Yards, suffered a second destructive fire within a year, supposed incendiary. Loss $20,000.

February 1, 1900, this date will remain a memorable one to Dayton firemen. It was a bitter cold morning with a high wind blowing, when they were called to J. P. Wolf & Sons tobacco warehouse, on the corner of First and Foundry Streets. The flames spread rapidly, and for a time it looked as if the department was unequel to the task of extinguishing them. Aid from Cincinnati, Columbus and Springfield was asked for, but before either Columbus or Cincinnati reached here the fire was under control. The men fought the flames heroically for hours, always at a great disadvantage, due to inadequate water pressure, the intense cold and high wind. The establishments of Wolf & Son, Benedict & Co., Dayton Paper Novelty Co. and E. Bimm & Sons' were destroyed, while other firms sustained minor losses. George Coy, one of the firemen was seriously injured, but no lives were lost. The total loss was $471,313, divided as follows: J. P. Wolf & Son, $383,000, Benedict & Co., $30,000, Dayton Paper Novelty Co., $47,800, E. Bimm & Sons', $8,800, other minor losses, $1,713. This was the largest fire Dayton has suffered since the Turner Opera House fire in 1869.

George Coy, the fireman, seriously injured at this fire by a falling wall—it was at first thought fatally—four months after the fire was again able to be about.

BROWN STREET HOSE COMPANY.

1. MICHAEL McCARTHY. 2. HENRY SWALEM. 3. LAWRENCE KIRCHNER.
4. ALBERT FIORINI.

WASHINGTON STREET HOSE COMPANY.

1. WILLIAM ECKERT. 2. WILLIAM KRAMER. 3. ROBERT DONOGHUE.
4. CHARLES TAYLOR.

NORTH DAYTON HOSE COMPANY.

1. WILLIAM PLUNKETT. 2. DANIEL MALONEY. 3. JAMES GRADY.
4. HERMAN KOEPNICK.

IN MEMORIUM.

No record was kept of the laddies who "died in harness," previous to the organization of the present system.

The first death of this character of which there is a record, is that of Charles Richards, who was connected with the department for years. He contracted typhoid fever, followed by brain trouble, resulting in death. He was a good fireman and was respected by his fellow firemen.

The next death was that of Joseph Kratochwill, a commissioner, who passed away September 21, 1887, after a short illness. He was a citizen of well tried probity, earnest in all things, and invaluable in many respects. His public and private character was of a nature to place him among Dayton's most respected and influential citizens.

On the 26th of January, 1889, William O'Connell an efficient fireman, died from injuries received by being run over by a railroad train. He was considered a brave and noble member of the department, and his untimely end was greatly regretted by his companions.

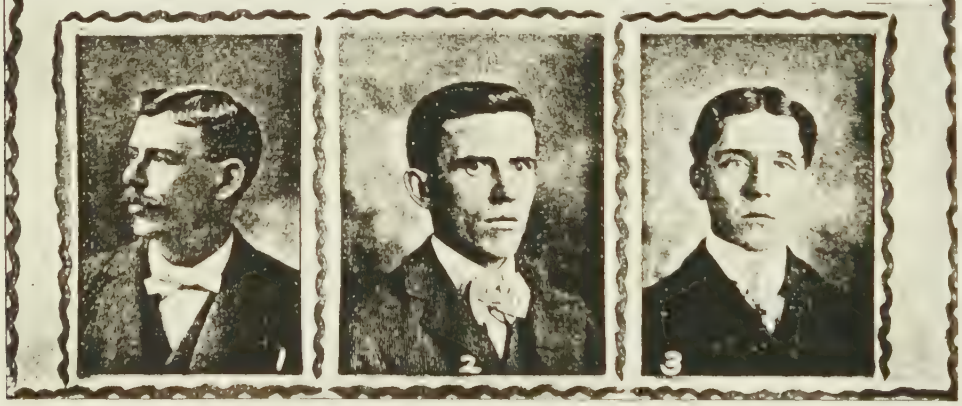
The next death was that of William Wright, a very efficient and capable fireman. He had spent some years in the tropical climate in South America in service in the U. S. Navy, and on his return, the climate and hard, irregular life of a fireman, proved too much for him. He contracted pneumonia, which followed by hasty consumption, resulted in his death, January 25, 1891.

In the same year, two more worthy firemen were called to the great beyond; their deaths being due to pneumonia, the result of severe colds contracted at fires. The first was Samuel Randall, who died April 26, 1891, and the other Frank Schaffer who died December 10, 1891. Both are credited in memory as having been good firemen.

The department enjoyed a long respite from death after the year 1891. On September 16, 1899, Adam Dixon, an old fireman, and for years one of

LINDEN AVENUE HOSE COMPANY.

1. DANIEL WOLFRATH. 2. MICHAEL CAULFIEFD. 3. ANTHONY BOGA.
4. CHARLES SAMUELS.



TELEPHONE OPERATORS—FIRE EXCHANGE.

1. MATTHEW GITZINGER. 2. CHARLES MURPHY. 3. WILLIAM HUGHEY.

the most trusted members of the department, died. After the great Gebhart Lumber Yard and Lutheran Church fire, he took ill, due to exhaustion and exposure, finally resulting in his death. Charles Hagen also one of the bravest men on the force, has never recovered from the effects of this same fire, and though still alive, is a bed-ridden paralytic, perfectly helpless.

On April 29, 1900, the tolling of the alarm bell told of the death of William Getzendanner, another worthy fireman, who gave the best years of his life in service, protecting Dayton property and lives from fire.

The last death recorded is that of James Bear, who died on May 16, 1900, from injuries received the night before, by being thrown from one of the vehicles while running to a fire. The accident occured on the corner of Webster and Second Streets. Mr. Bear served as a fireman for many years, and was among the valued members of the department.

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